

Message Text

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R 291628Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8083
INFO AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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PASS AGRICULTURE ELECTRONICALLY FOR FAS ADMINISTRATOR
HUGHES
WARSAW, BELGRADE, BONN, MOSCOW, VIENNA FOR AGATTACHE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAGR, GE
SUBJ: AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE
REF: (A) BERLIN 5543, (B) BERLIN 4560, (C) BERLIN 5610

1. SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR REFERRED TO EXPANSION OF
FUNCTIONAL CONTACTS AND COOPERATION US-GDR OVER PAST
YEAR. MENTIONED TENTATIVE DATE FOR GRAIN CONSULTATIONS,
DISCUSSED PROPOSED VISIT OF COOPERATOR GROUPS TO GDR,
AND REQUESTED DATA ON CURRENT HARVEST. MINISTER
KUHRIG SUPPLIED NO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON GRAIN
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CONSULTATIONS BUT AGREED IN ALL RESPECTS TO COOPERATOR
MEETING, TO ARRANGING FARM TOUR FOR VISITORS AND
WELCOMED ANIMAL FEEDING SEMINAR AT AGRA FAIR IN 1979.
KUHRIG ALSO EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT OVER POOR RESULTS
IN AUGUST 27 SHIPMENT OF BREEDING STOCK FROM UNITED
STATES. WE VIEW RESPONSIVENESS CONCERNING COOPERATOR
VISIT AS NEW AND POSITIVE ELEMENT IN US-GDR COOPERATION.

PRESENCE OF ELM OF MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AT MEETING CLEAR INDICATION THIS PART OF COORDINATED GDR POLICY. KUHRIG STRESSED THAT CONTACTS WITH "PRIVATE" ENTITIES IMPORTANT BUT WAS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR GOOD GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. AMBASSADOR MET WITH GDR MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE HEINZ KUHRIG TO DISCUSS US-GDR COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF AGRICULTURE. ALSO PRESENT WERE JOACHIM ELM, AMERICAN DESK, MFA; DR. WERNER MUENCH, AGMIN DIRECTOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS; AND EMBASSY AGATTACHE.

3. MINISTER KUHRIG EXPRESSED THANKS FOR AMBASSADOR'S CALL. AMBASSADOR STATED THAT IT WAS SOURCE OF SATISFACTION THAT MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS CONTACTS IN CULTURE, SCIENCE AND TRADE HAD INCREASED DURING PAST YEAR. HE RECOGNIZED THE UNRESOLVED BILATERAL PROBLEMS, INDICATED OUR READINESS TO SEARCH FOR SOLUTIONS IN A POSITIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE SPIRIT. AMBASSADOR SAID WE WELCOMED ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES FROM GDR TO HELP RESOLVE OUTSTANDING BILATERAL ISSUES. AMBASSADOR SINGLED OUT EXCELLENT RECEPTION ACCORDED TO DRESDEN EXHIBITION IN WASHINGTON AS EVIDENCED BY VISIT OF 400,000 PEOPLE.

4. AMBASSADOR SAID WE WERE PLEASED ABOUT OUR INITIAL
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COOPERATION IN AGRICULTURE. HE THANKED MINISTER KUHRIG FOR OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT AGRA FAIR, FEEDMILL OPERATION, MILKING PARLOR AND NOTED CONVERSATIONS ON AGRICULTURE WITH CHAIRMEN OF SEVERAL BEZIRKS (COUNTIES). AMBASSADOR ALSO EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR RECEPTION ACCORDED AGRICULTURAL PLANNING AND MARKET DEVELOPMENT GROUP OF FAS/USDA WHICH RECENTLY VISITED GDR. HE SAID THAT ALL WERE IMPRESSED WITH EVIDENT PROGRESS OBSERVED IN FIELD OF AGRICULTURE.

5. AMBASSADOR STATED THAT UNITED STATES VALUES ITS AGRICULTURAL TRADE WITH GDR AND INTENDS TO REMAIN RELIABLE SUPPLIER. HE POINTED OUT THAT U.S. HAD PROPOSED OCTOBER 24 AS DATE FOR GRAIN CONSULTATIONS TO NAHRUNG TO DISCUSS AGRICULTURAL TRADE BUT THAT FINAL CONFIRMATION NOT YET RECEIVED. HOWEVER, WE WISH TO GO BEYOND TRADE AND TO DEVELOP AN EXCHANGE OF AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY, TO ENCOURAGE EXCHANGE OF VISITS AND TO EXPAND AGRICULTURAL CONTACTS IN GENERAL, WHICH WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO BILATERAL RELATIONS.

6. AMBASSADOR REFERRED TO PLANNED VISIT OF REPRESENTATIVES OF AMERICAN SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION (ASA), U.S. FEED

GRAINS COUNCIL, GREAT PLAINS WHEAT, AND PERHAPS NATIONAL
RENDERERS ASSOCIATION ON SEPTEMBER 27. HE INDICATED
THESE GROUPS REPRESENTED FARMERS AND WERE OF GREAT

IMPORTANCE. HE SAID THAT AGATT HAD REQUESTED APPOINTMENT
AT AGMIN TO DISCUSS THIS VISIT. PURPOSE OF COOPERATORS
WAS THREEFOLD: FIRST, TO EXPLAIN FUNCTIONS OF COOPERATOR
GROUPS; SECONDLY, TO ANSWER QUESTIONS AND EXPLAIN
MUTUAL PROBLEMS; AND, THIRDLY, TO PRESENT CONCRETE PLAN
FOR AREAS OF COOPERATION WITH GDR. IN THIS REGARD,
AMBASSADOR NOTED HE HAD MENTIONED POSSIBILITY OF
SEMINAR DURING HIS VISIT AT THE AGRA FAIR. HE SAID

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COOPERATORS WISH TO PRESENT SEMINAR ON SUBJECT OF ANIMAL
FEEDING AT AGRA FAIR IN JUNE/JULY OF 1979. THE
COOPERATORS ALSO WISH TO VISIT SELECTED INSTALLATIONS
IN ANIMAL FEEDING AREA.

7. KUHRIG REPLIED THAT GDR HAD PREVIOUSLY HAD CONTACT
WITH SOME COOPERATOR GROUPS (HE SPECIFICALLY
MENTIONED ASA) BUT THESE CONTACTS WILL NOT SUBSTITUTE
FOR GOOD "STATE-TO-STATE" RELATIONS. HOWEVER, HE

UNDERSTOOD THAT THESE GROUPS WERE VERY IMPORTANT IN UNITED STATES; THE GDR WELCOMED THE OPPORTUNITY FOR TALKS WITH THE VISITORS AND WAS PLEASED ABOUT THEIR INTEREST IN GDR AGRICULTURE. MINISTER KUHRIG GAVE HIS APPROVAL FOR SEPTEMBER 27 VISIT AND THE PROPOSED ANIMAL FEEDING SEMINAR AT AGRA FAIR. IT WAS AGREED
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THAT AGATT WOULD WORK OUT DETAILS WITH DR. MUENCH.

8. KUHRIG STRESSED THAT THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR TRADE PROBLEMS INVOLVING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS. (IT WAS APPARENT FROM HIS PRESENTATION THAT HE VIEWED COOPERATOR GROUPS AS AKIN TO TRADING COMPANIES. THE SEPTEMBER 27 MEETING WILL PROVIDE A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO CLARIFY FUNCTIONS OF COOPERATOR GROUPS.) HE SAID THAT THIS YEAR WOULD SEE A GOOD GRAIN CROP WHICH WOULD REDUCE IMPORTS AND HE WAS VERY PLEASED AS MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE TO REPORT GOOD HARVEST. HE SAID THAT THE POTATO HARVEST WAS PROMISING AND HOPED FOR FAVORABLE WEATHER IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS TO ASSURE A GOOD SUGAR BEET HARVEST. ANIMAL PRODUCTION, KUHRIG SAID, WOULD REACH TARGETED LEVELS.

9. IN REGARD TO FIELDS OF COOPERATION, KUHRIG SAID THAT HE WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN DEVELOPING COOPERATION IN ANIMAL BREEDING AND PLANT SEED DEVELOPMENT. HE SAID IN THIS CASE AGRICULTURE BORE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY.

10. KUHRIG THEN RAISED SUBJECT OF THE AUGUST 27 CATTLE AND BOAR SHIPMENT TO GDR (REF. C) AND HIGH DEATH LOSSES WHICH OCCURRED. HE SUGGESTED THAT THERE WAS NEED FOR GREATER SECURITY IN ARRANGING THESE SHIPMENTS AND ADDED THAT HE WAS UNHAPPY ABOUT RESULTS SINCE AGMIN HAD ALREADY ARRANGED FOR BREEDING STOCK DELIVERIES TO ANIMAL BREEDING UNITS. HE SUGGESTED THAT THE PLANE USED TO TRANSPORT THE ANIMALS WAS TOO SMALL FOR THE NUMBER OF ANIMALS PLACED ON BOARD.

11. AGATT REPLIED THAT HE HAD JUST RECEIVED CALL FROM THE COMMERCIAL SHIPPER WHO STATED THAT PROBLEM MAY
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HAVE BEEN RELATED TO FAILURE IN OXYGEN EQUIPMENT OR TO EXCEEDINGLY HOT WEATHER EXPERIENCED AT TAKEOFF. HE ADDED SHIPPER HOPED TO ARRANGE FOR REPLACEMENT

SHIPMENT. AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED REGRET AND EMPHASIZED THAT COMPLAINTS CONCERNING ANY AGRICULTURAL SHIPMENT FROM U.S. SHOULD BE MADE KNOWN PROMPTLY TO EMBASSY.

12. AMBASSADOR PRESENTED MINISTER KUHRIG MOST RECENT USDA CROP REPORT DATA. HE THEN ASKED THE MINISTER FOR HIS ESTIMATES OF SIZE OF CURRENT GDR GRAIN CROP, WHICH HE POINTED OUT EMBASSY ESTIMATES AT 9.0 - 9.5 MILLION M.T. MINISTER KUHRIG SAID THIS MIGHT BE ACCURATE; HE ADDED THAT HE HAD ALREADY INDICATED THAT CROP WAS NEARLY COMPLETELY HARVESTED BUT THAT IN GDR THE AGMIN WAS REQUIRED TO COUNT THE HARVEST ON EVERY HECTARE BEFORE IT COULD MAKE AN ACCURATE STATEMENT ABOUT CROP SIZE. HE RELATED STORY OF AN INACCURATE ESTIMATE ATTRIBUTED TO A SOVIET OFFICIAL SEVERAL YEARS AGO WHICH RESULTED IN GREAT CHAGRIN; HE DID NOT WISH TO PLACE HIMSELF IN A SIMILAR SITUATION, HE SAID. AMBASSADOR SAID THAT IN ANY CASE HE HOPED THAT WE COULD GET AN ESTIMATE OF THE SIZE OF THE CROP BEFORE PUBLICATION OF NEXT YEAR'S OFFICIAL STATISTICS. MINISTER READILY ACKNOWLEDGED LATENESS OF OFFICIAL STATISTICS AND SAID THAT, CERTAINLY, SUCH INFORMATION COULD BE RELEASED IN ADVANCE, BUT DID NOT INDICATE PRECISELY WHEN. AMBASSADOR SAID THAT IT WOULD BE IN INTEREST OF GDR TO RELEASE CLARIFYING DATA ON TRANSSHIPMENTS OF AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES, AND HE HOPED COOPERATION ON

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THIS MATTER WOULD INCREASE IN THE FUTURE SINCE CURRENT
DATA UNDERSTATE TRADE BETWEEN GDR AND U.S.

13. IN CONCLUSION, KUHRIG AGAIN EMPHASIZED THAT
COOPERATOR GROUPS COULD NOT SUBSTITUTE FOR GOOD
GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS BUT ACKNOWLEDGED
THEY WERE PART OF EFFORTS TO DEVELOP BILATERAL COOPERA-
TION. GOOD RELATIONS WOULD DEPEND ON STEP-BY-STEP
IMPROVEMENT; HE WAS OPEN TO CONTACTS IN SCIENTIFIC
AND AGRICULTURAL EXCHANGE.

14. COMMENT: PRESENCE OF MFA DESK OFFICER ELM INDICATES
CLOSE INTRA-GOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION OF GDR ON
MATTERS DISCUSSED AND A SIGNAL THAT GDR CONTINUES TO
SEEK STEADY IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS. RECENT GDR
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RESPONSIVENESS ON NARCOTICS COOPERATION, ACCEPTANCE OF
COOPERATOR GROUP VISIT, AGREEMENT TO PLAN FARM TOUR, AND
EVEN MORE NOTEWORTHY, ACCEPTANCE OF AGRA FAIR AS CITE
OF SEMINAR ARE CONCRETE EXAMPLES OF THIS. WE BELIEVE
THAT THESE CLOSELY CONTROLLED DEVELOPMENTS SHOULD NOT
BE OVEREMPHASIZED, AS OFFICIALS HERE CONTINUE TO SHOW
SOME CONCERN ABOUT THE STATE OF OVERALL EAST-WEST
RELATIONS AND POSSIBLE ADVERSE IMPACT OF US-GDR
COOPERATION. AT THE MOMENT THE GDR SEEMS PREPARED TO
MOVE FORWARD IN EXPANDING COOPERATION IN SPECIFIC
FUNCTIONAL AREAS; THE AGRICULTURAL COOPERATOR GROUPS
SHOULD THEREFORE BE ENCOURAGED TO DEVELOP SPECIFIC
PROPOSALS FOR DISCUSSION WITH GDR OFFICIALS. BOLEN

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